

Vermont State Hospital Policy		Sec/page
Patient Internet Access Policy		
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Approved by Governing Body of Vermont State Hospital:		Date:

POLICY

The Vermont State Hospital views patient internet access as an important service to supporting self-directed care. Patients can use the internet in order to facilitate gathering information about their illness and treatment options, to assist in discharge planning, to maintain community supports, as a normalizing social experience, and to gain skills and knowledge about using computers and the internet.

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for allowing the internet for use as a treatment tool, and to successfully supervise internet access for these means.

PROCEDURE:

1. Access to the internet will be provided as part of the psychosocial rehabilitative services patients receive at VSH.
2. Patients will work with their treatment teams to be referred to groups that include internet access, with an emphasis on the specific skills and information to be gained thru internet use.
3. VSH will maintain a list of prohibited internet content (see attached list), in order to support good decision-making by patients, and to help promote the positive social benefits of using the internet in a public setting.
4. Staff will supervise patient internet use to ensure that restricted content is not accessed. In the event that a patient does attempt to view restricted content, the patient will be directed to approved content. If a patient demonstrates a consistent inability to avoid restricted content they may have their internet access curtailed. (see VSH Patient Internet Access procedure)
5. Restricted content includes any contact with people outside VSH who a patient is legally restricted from contacting. Any use of the internet to contact people who a patient is restricted from contacting will be reported to the DMH Legal Department.